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For immediate release

April 12, 2016

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Students Pledge to Support Tobacco-Free Rodeos



Helena high school students sign tobacco-free rodeo pledges. Left to right are Jordyn Everson, Matt Lesofski, and Ty Everson.

High school athletes across the state are welcoming rodeo season by pledging to compete tobacco-free.

Since 2008, students have been able to participate in a series of tobacco-free rodeos every year thanks to a partnership between the Montana High School Rodeo Association and the Montana Tobacco Use Prevention Program (MTUPP). Because of this partnership, Montana became the first state in the nation to offer tobacco-free rodeos.

“Smoking, chewing, or using tobacco in any form hurts an athlete’s performance in so many ways,” said Karen Lane, with the Lewis and Clark Public Health Tobacco Use Prevention Program. “We honor and support all the great athletes who’ve made the decision to be free of tobacco and its deadly influence.”

This spring, tobacco-free rodeos are scheduled in Helena, Choteau, Cohagen, Darby, and Hardin.

Student contestants can sign the pledge at any of

these rodeos. High school seniors in good standing with MHSRA who sign the pledge become eligible for college scholarships.

Last year, MTUPP gave out five \$5,000 scholarships and presented prizes to winners of each of the tobacco-free rodeos.

MTUPP and reACT, a teen-led movement against tobacco use, will be among the sponsors of the Montana High School Rodeo Finals in Baker June 7-12.

For more information, visit the reACT website at reactmt.com/tobacco-free-rodeo or contact Lewis and Clark Public Health, 457-8900.

Our mission is to improve and protect the health of all Lewis and Clark County residents.